THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B. K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b)Yes Sir. The subsidy on various fertilizers is being continued. The subsidy on fertilizers is paid to manufactures/importers to bridge the gap between the delivered cost of fertilizers at the farm gate level and the notified Maximum Retail Price (MRP) on which it is sold to the farmers. The farmers are benefited with this subsidy in the form of notified MRP, which is much lower than the delivered cost at the farm gate level.

(c) Urea and DAP are partly imported in the country to bridge the gap between demand and indigenous production of these fertilizers. The requirement of Muriate of Potash (MOP) is completely met through import, as there is no indigenous production in the country.

In urea, the indigenous cost of production varies from approximately Rs. 5078.00 to Rs. 20,573.00 per Metric Tonne depending upon the type of feedstock used and the vintage of the plant. The weighted average cost of indigenous production in 2005-06 was Rs. 9844 per MT. Correspondingly, the cost of imported urea depends upon the prevailing international prices. The approximate import parity price of urea for 2005-2006, was Rs. 11231.56 per MT.

The cost of imported DAP depends upon the prevaling International prices. The weighted average delivered price of imported DAP in the year 2005-2006 was Rs. 15075.00 per MT whereas the average delivered price of indigenous DAP in the corresponding period was Rs. 15316.00 per MT.

The average delivered price of imported MOP in 2005-2006 was Rs. 11049.00 per MT.

Problems of sugarcane growers

1222. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to make any short-term and long-term measures to address the problems faced by sugarcane growers and sugar industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also planning to make any long-term policy for production of ethanol and power through co-generation plants to facilitate Indian sugar industry to become a major player in global markets; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government takes appropriate measures, as and when needed, to address the problems of sugarcane growers and sugar industry.

(c) and (d) The Government has drafted a National Policy on Bio-fuels, which includes bio-ethanol and bio-diesel, for promotion and use of bio-fuels on short, medium and long term basis in the country. As regards co-generation, the Government is implementing a programme for promotion of grid interactive power generation project based on Renewable Energy sources including surplus power generation from bagasse in the sugar mills.

Sugar production in Maharashtra

1223. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISCTIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite lower recovery level, mills in Maharashtra are likely to still end up produing over 70 lakh tonnes of sugar during 2006-07 season;

(b) if so, whether there is no change of earlier estimate of 70 lakh tonnes whether production in 2006-07 would cross a record 70 million tonnes and it would be more in 2007-08;

(c) if so, whether Government have lifted their export ban and Maharashtra is looking at the export option; and

(d) if so, the total export of sugar that would be made during 2006-07?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The sugar production in Maharashtra during 2006-07 sugar season was provisionally estimated